



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## THE VISIT TO SPRINGFIELD OF RICHARD M. JOHNSON, MAY 18-20, 1843.

In the presidential election of 1840 the Democratic party secured the electoral vote of Illinois by a small majority, though the Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, was elected president of the United States.

During the campaign great Whig meetings were held in all parts of the State. Galena, in the extreme northwestern part of the state held a significant meeting, as did the little town of Carlinville forty miles south of Springfield, and the capital city, Springfield,\* held a great rally with 15,000 people in attendance, at which the rude pageantry of border politics played a great part. It was the "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" campaign.

This Whig victory produced a confusion in party lines and the Whig and Democratic newspapers of the times, alike, in Illinois, show many changes of front in their attempts to explain the political policies of their respective candidates and parties.

John Tyler, who was elected vice-president on the ticket which elected William Henry Harrison president, had succeeded to the presidency upon the death of General Harrison within a few weeks after the inauguration, and was by 1843 laying his plans to secure his own re-election as a Whig.

The Democrats had of course plenty of candidates, among whom the most prominent were James Buchanan, Lewis Cass, and Thomas H. Benton. There also appeared in the Democratic party, especially in the West, a sentiment favoring the nomination of Richard M. Johnson, former vice-president, and military hero.

---

\*For an account of this Springfield meeting, see "The Young Men's Convention and Old Soldiers' Meeting at Springfield, June 3-4, 1840," by Isabel Jamison in *Transactions Illinois State Historical Society*, 1914, page 160.

Old John Reynolds, former Governor of Illinois, who was always an active politician was strongly in favor of Johnson. The Belleville Advocate, Governor Reynolds' paper, came out for Johnson in 1841 and proclaimed him "the friend of the West and the Advocate of the reduction of the price of public lands."<sup>†</sup>

Reynolds also claimed that in St. Clair county, the friends of General James Shields, Lyman Trumbull, and Gustavus Koerner packed the convention against resolutions favoring the candidacy of Johnson. However the Illinois friends of Johnson stood by him and in the Spring of 1843 he made a visit to Illinois where he was well received.

On May 8, 1843, he visited Belleville where a great meeting was held with Governor Reynolds as the presiding officer. Meetings in honor of Colonel Johnson were held in other towns including Jacksonville and Springfield.

Elaborate preparations were made for the Springfield meeting. A committee consisting of the most prominent Democrats in the city was appointed to arrange for the great man's reception. The Illinois State Register printed a full account of the personnel and membership of the committee, and later an account of the distinguished guest and the details of the manner in which he was entertained. Colonel Johnson arrived in Springfield on the afternoon of Friday, May 18, 1843, and remained in the city until late Sunday evening, May 20.

Springfield was in 1843 a city of less than 5,000 people, and it must have taxed its hospitality and resources to entertain such large crowds. The chairman of the reception committee was W. L. D. Ewing.

In 1833 the Lieutenant-Governor of the State, Zadoc Casey, resigned, as he had become a member of Congress, and W. L. D. Ewing, who was president of the State Senate, became by virtue of his office lieutenant-governor, and upon the resignation of the Governor, John Reynolds, Dec. 17, 1834,

---

<sup>†</sup> Illinois Centennial History, Vol. 2, Pease, "The Frontier State," pages 275-276.

who also had been elected to the United States Congress, Ewing became governor of the state and served fifteen days, until the inauguration of Governor Joseph Duncan, which occurred December 3, 1834.

On December 29, 1835, Mr. Ewing was elected United States Senator to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Elias Kent Kane, and served until the close of Mr. Kane's term in 1837. Ewing was then again elected to the Illinois Legislature, and became the speaker of the House, defeating the young Abraham Lincoln for that high position. In March, 1843, Mr. Ewing was elected Auditor of Public Accounts by the Illinois General Assembly, and he served in this capacity until his death, March 25, 1846. He was for many years a prominent figure in Illinois politics. He was State Auditor at the visit of Colonel Johnson, when he served as chairman of the reception committee.

George R. Weber, the secretary of the committee, was one of the editors of the State Register, the firm being Walters and Weber. The account of the meeting of the reception committee as printed in the State Register in its issue of May 19, 1843, is here given in full, as is the account of the meeting and the reception to the hero and the addresses on that occasion as published in the Register of May 26, of the same year.

---

#### MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE RECEPTION OF COLONEL JOHNSON.

(From the Illinois State Register, May 19, 1843.)

At a meeting of democratic citizens of Springfield, assembled in Jackson Hall, for the purpose of adopting measures for the suitable reception of Colonel R. M. Johnson, on his contemplated visit to this city.

On motion, General Ewing was called to the chair, and George R. Weber appointed secretary.

The object of the meeting having been explained, on motion of John Calhoun, Esq., it was

*Resolved*, That a committee of arrangements be appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the reception of Colonel R. M. Johnson.

*Resolved* further, That a committee be appointed to meet Colonel Johnson at Jacksonville, and escort him to this city.

In pursuance of the first resolution the chair appointed

Messrs. James W. Keys, George R. Weber, E. Cook, T. Lewis, Reuben F. Ruth, Isaac B. Curran, Michael Doyle, John M. Burkhardt, M. Glenn, Charles Hurst, C. Webster, William Fondy, William Carpenter, Morris Lindsay, J. Wickersham, G. G. Grubb, A. Elliott, J. Parkinson, J. Barrett, P. Foster, J. Drennan, A. Trumbo, T. Long, J. W. Taylor, J. Taylor and Doctor Holbert.

In pursuance of the second resolution the chair appointed Messrs. John Calhoun, M. Brayman, Thompson Campbell, D. B. Campbell, William Walters, Edward Jones, James W. Barrett, Edmund Roberts, Jesse B. Thomas, Milton Carpenter and E. R. Wiley.

On motion of Mr. Roberts it was

*Resolved*, That the Committee of Arrangements be instructed to invite the citizens of the city and county, without distinction of party, and also the military, to participate with us in welcoming Colonel Johnson to the city. On motion the meeting adjourned.

W. L. D. Ewing, *Chairman*.

George R. Weber, *Secretary*.

RECEPTION OF COL. R. M. JOHNSON AT SPRINGFIELD,  
MAY 19, 1843.<sup>1</sup>

(From the Illinois State Register, May 26, 1843.)

The reception of the Hero of the Thames at the seat of government last week, was an event which will occur but once in a life time. The enthusiasm—the joyful recognition of old friends and old soldiers—the immense multitude of anxious and admiring spectators—the splendid appearance of our companies of “citizen soldiers”—the waving of handkerchiefs from the crowded windows—the firing of cannon and musquetry at short intervals—the venerable appearance of the scar-covered Hero—the eloquence and deep feeling with which he was addressed and the candid, modest, impartial but soul-stirring reply of the Hero—all combined to render the scenes of the day so vivid and striking as to rivet them on the memory forever. Who could look on the Hero and patriot, as he recited over the battles of the Thames, without feeling

<sup>1</sup> Richard Mentor Johnson, vice-president of the United States, 1836-1840, was born at Bryant's Station, Ky., October 17, 1781. His early education was limited. He had four years at grammar school and finished his education at Transylvania University. He began to practice law when he was only nineteen years of age. At twenty-two he entered into public life. He was elected to the state legislature in 1804, and after serving two years in that position was elected to a seat in the United States house of representatives as a Republican. He was re-elected to congress, and, with the exception of a few months, served from 1807 until 1819. Immediately after the adjournment of congress in 1812 he returned home, where he organized three companies of volunteers, which being combined with another, he was placed in command of the whole, and took part in the battle of the Maumee, where he killed an Indian chief, supposed to be Tecumseh. Afterward the question, “Who killed Tecumseh?” passed into a saying, and the fact has never been positively settled. After the fall of Tecumseh the Indians continued a brisk fire while retiring, but a regiment brought up by Gov. Shelby soon silenced them, while, a part of Col. Johnson's men having flanked them, the rout became general. At the moment when Johnson's regiment made its charge, Gen. Proctor with about fifty dragoons fled from the field. His carriage and papers were taken. It is said that his flight was so rapid that in twenty-four hours he found himself sixty-five miles distant from the battlefield. Col. Johnson was carried from the field almost lifeless. He passed through incredible fatigue, severities and privations during his passage from Detroit to Sandusky and from thence to Kentucky, being carried over a distance of 300 miles, through the wilderness, in the winter, suspended between two horses. He remained about two months in Kentucky, when he had so far recovered from his wounds that he was able to repair to Washington and resume his seat in congress. The fame of his exploits had preceded him, and at the capital he was received with distinguished testimonials of respect and admiration. On his way to the house he was cheered by the populace, and congress passed a joint resolution ordering that he should be presented with a suitable testimonial for his eminent services. In 1819, at the close of his congressional term, Col. Johnson was elected to the United States senate in place of John J. Crittenden, who had resigned. At the end of his first senatorial term he was re-elected and served until March 3, 1829. From this time until 1837 he was continuously elected a member of the house of representatives. At the election of Martin Van Buren to the presidency, Col. Johnson was the candidate for vice-president, and was chosen by the senate to that position, no choice having been made by the electoral college. At the end of his term of service he returned home, but was afterward again sent to congress, and was a member of that body at the time of his death. In 1814 Col. Johnson was appointed Indian commissioner. He died in Frankfort, Ky., November 19, 1850.

proud of his country—proud that he was an American citizen? Who could listen to the recital of the “forlorn hope” headed by Col. Johnson, called for by one of the audience—an act of bravery performed by twenty men, unparalleled in history for its self-devotion and courage—without feeling the sure conviction, that while America possessed such noble and brave spirits, she never can be conquered by a foreign foe? But we are anticipating the events of the day.

In the largest part of our edition last week, we announced the expected arrival of Col. Johnson on Monday last. While we were writing the paragraph, however, the veteran was within fifty miles of Springfield and coming on at a rapid pace. The Committee of reception left this place to meet Col. Johnson on Friday morning last; and met him at Berlin, sixteen miles from Springfield, about 2 o'clock P. M.; to which place he had been accompanied by a Committee of the public-spirited citizens of Jacksonville. At Berlin, Col. Johnson enjoyed the hospitality of his old friend Mr. Yates<sup>2</sup> who prepared one of the best dinners we have ever partaken of for this many a day.

After taking leave of the Committee from Jacksonville, and the people of Berlin, Col. Johnson set out for Springfield about 4 o'clock on Friday, accompanied by the Committee of Reception. He reached Springfield just before sunset and amidst an immense crowd of people retired to his lodgings at the American Hotel.

On the next day (Saturday) about 10 o'clock A. M. a procession was formed opposite the American under the direction of Col. R. Allen,<sup>3</sup> Chief Marshal, which moved through the city about an hour afterwards in the following order:

<sup>2</sup> Henry Yates, son of Abner Yates and Polly Anne Hawes, born in Fayette County, Kentucky, October 29, 1786; died at New Berlin, Illinois, October 10, 1865. Father of war governor, Richard Yates.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Allen was born in the year 1800, in Greensburg, Green County, Ky. He was married there to a Miss Anderson, and came to Springfield, Ill., in 1831. Col. Allen engaged in the mercantile business as a member of the firm of Allen & Blankenship, soon after coming to Springfield. He also became a mail contractor on a very extensive scale, and brought a large number of fine stage coaches from Nashville, Tenn., being the first ever introduced into the State. He made Springfield his headquarters, and on some occasions had as many as five hundred horses on hand at one time. Colonel Allen was one of the directors of the old State Bank. He was connected with the army in the Mormon war in 1845, and in the Mexican war of 1846-47. Not long after coming to Springfield, Mrs. Allen died, and Mr. Allen was married in April, 1833, to Jane Eliza Bergen. They had two children.

## Chief Marshal

The Artillery Commanded by Capt. Barker.

Marshal	The Cadets	Marshal
	Commanded by Capt. Johnson	

The Springfield Band

Marshal	The Sangamon Guards	Marshal
	Commanded by Capt. Baker. <sup>4</sup>	

Col. R. M. Johnson

In a carriage drawn by four horses and accompanied by the Committee of Reception. Committee of Arrangements.

Marshal	The Governor <sup>5</sup>	Marshal
	The Orator of the Day	

Officers of State

Citizens and strangers in carriages, on horseback and on foot.

In this order the procession moved through all the principal streets of the city and the Hero was greeted from the windows and housetops, with the waving of handkerchiefs from the ladies, the huzzas of the people to which the Colonel responded in his usual frank and courteous manner.

The procession then halted before the State House, when the military and citizens filled the Hall of the House of Representatives and the ladies occupied the gallery. Col. Johnson accompanied by the Committee of Reception then entered the Hall where he was greeted with three deafening cheers by the people. Approaching the chair of the speaker, Thompson Campbell,<sup>6</sup> Esq., Secretary of State, arose from the chair and addressed the hero as follows:

---

<sup>4</sup> Edward Dickinson Baker.

<sup>5</sup> Governor Thomas Ford.

<sup>6</sup> Thompson Campbell, Secretary of State and Congressman, was born in Chester County, Pa., in 1811; removed in childhood to the western part of the State and was educated at Jefferson College, afterward reading law at Pittsburgh. Soon after being admitted to the bar he removed to Galena, Ill., where he had acquired some mining interests, and, in 1843, was appointed Secretary of State by Governor Ford, but resigned in 1846, and became a delegate to the constitutional convention of 1847; in 1850 was elected as a Democrat to Congress from the Galena District, but defeated for re-election in 1852 by E. B. Washburne. He was then appointed by President Pierce commissioner to look after certain land grants by the Mexican Government in California, removing to that State in 1853, but resigned this position



“Col. Richard M. Johnson—

Sir: In the name and in behalf of the Democratic citizens of Sangamon County I bid you a sincere and grateful welcome. The joyousness which brightens every countenance in this vast assembly speaks in a language more eloquent than words the honest sentiments of gratitude and love which your appearance in our midst has waked in every heart. It is unnecessary for me on the present occasion to refer to the past events of your most eventful life; they have become a part of the history of our county and are written in letters of unfading brilliancy on the hearts of your countrymen.

This beloved Union which your wisdom as a statesman has strengthened and your blood shed in its defense has cemented, may justly, as it has done claim you for its own; but while the West acknowledges the justice of the claim it cannot yield the loftiest pride of its young hope, the pride of being the Sire of so worthy and noble a son. Devoted as you have ever been to Western interest, and Western prosperity—watching with keen anxiety and more than parental feeling, the western settler since that day when you exchanged the secure and peaceful halls of Congress for the field of battle—of danger and of blood—“trusting as you did then to the liberality of Congress for indemnification,” it would be base ingratitude in those to whom your mighty arm gave protection, and your more than Roman patriotism, and courage, peace and security—not to present to you their highest, purest, holiest gift, the free will offering of a free people, the right hand of friendship and the heart of gratitude.

Happy, happy indeed are they that to them has been reserved the opportunity of hearing that voice which at the ever

---

about 1855 to engage in general practice. In 1859 he made an extended visit to Europe with his family, and, on his return, located in Chicago, the following year becoming a candidate for presidential elector-at-large on the Breckinridge ticket; in 1861 returned to California, and, on the breaking out of the Civil War, became a zealous champion of the Union cause, by his speeches exerting a powerful influence upon the destiny of the State. He also served in the California Legislature during the war, and, 1864, was a member of the Baltimore convention which nominated Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency a second time, assisting most ably in the subsequent campaign to carry the State for the Republican ticket. Died in San Francisco, December 6, 1868.

memorable battle of the Thames—amidst the din of war, the horrid clash of steel meeting steel, and louder and more terrible than all, the savage yell of the savage foe was heard far above the storm, exhorting your brave followers on to the conflict—animating them by your example, “To deeds of noble daring”; and if it should be the will of heaven, to die for their country. That was a proud day for the American flag and on that day the American eagle, “soaring in its pride of place” took a loftier flight. Could the crowned monarchs of the old world have beheld you when you rose from your seat in Congress, from amidst the assembled wisdom and guardian fathers of the republic to meet her enemies on the field of battle and had their vision extended to that field, from which victorious you were carried faint and bleeding and again looked upon you when you returned to that seat, pale, emaciated and covered with scars, they would have exclaimed in trembling accents: “how vain, inconceivably vain is the attempt to subjugate, to conquer, a people with such Spartan spirit to fight their battles and such mighty minds to direct their councils.” However great the debt of gratitude we owe as a people for your services in the field, your unwavering support and able exposition of the great conservative principles of democracy, claim for you no less our high regard and lasting gratitude. They have given you a name which will be remembered in whatever country or in whatever clime the friends of civil, religious and political liberty shall find a home. Of all this your country has not been unmindful or forgetful. You have once been called to the second office within her gift and your name will doubtless together with others highly distinguished in the annals of American democracy be presented before the National Democratic Convention of 1844 and will pre-eminently claim its high and solemn consideration. If in its wisdom and patriotism it should present to the Democracy of the Union the name of Colonel Richard M. Johnson, I may here assert that there is no state in the Union where the Democracy will hail the nomination with louder and more sincere acclamations of joy than they will in the State of Illinois; they will rally around your standard, unfurl their banner to the breeze—“not soiled and worn,” with the principles un-

changed and unchangeable written in letters of living light upon its broad and ample folds and a victory worthy of the hero of the Thames will be the rich reward.

Permit me, sir, again in the name of this people—for I perceive many present who are opposed to you politically anxious to catch a glimpse of, and take by the hand the soldier of our common country—here too, are the young, the beautiful, the lovely and the matronly of the land, always the first to welcome the soldier to his peaceful home—the scattered flowers in life's path—for whom and in the name of our common country I bid you a most heartfelt welcome."

The eloquent address of Mr. Campbell being concluded the large hall resounded with a spontaneous shout of applause so deafening as to ring in our ears for an hour afterwards.

Col. Johnson then ascended the platform occupied by the chair of the speaker and addressed the assembly in a reply of about two hours in length—a reply which did not seem to us to occupy more than half an hour, so deeply interesting were his remarks. The old hero did not attempt to make any display of oratory or eloquence. He was eloquent—eloquent in his language, in the daring deeds he described, in the justice he rendered to his brave commander and his brother soldiers; and his very appearance spoke to the heart of every beholder in terms of patriotic eloquence which no language can describe.

We cannot undertake to follow Col. Johnson through his speech. We took no notes of it and the speaker himself did not make the slightest preparation. He began by returning his most sincere and heartfelt thanks to the persons present for the honor they had conferred upon him, and to the orator of the day for the eloquent and flattering speech to which we had all listened. He said he had left his home in Kentucky about forty-five days previous without the least expectation or wish of making any parade through the country. In fact he had approached every place he visited without notice—he was actually in St. Louis he said before the people there knew of his presence. He could not but feel the deeper gratitude and the

higher gratification in having become the object of such high distinction and honor wherever he went.

During the course of his speech Col. Johnson would often refer to many well known persons in the crowd from "Old Kentuck" who had left a good country for a better, as he was compelled to say since he had passed over the rich and beautiful prairies of Illinois.

In the scenes which he described during the last war, he would often refer to Col. Craig and several other brave and meritorious soldiers in that war who confirmed every statement made by Col. Johnson. The old hero said that while he was a member of Congress in 1812 news of the massacre at the river Raisin by Proctor and his murdering bands had thrown all Kentucky into mourning. He applied to President Monroe who gave him a commission to raise 1,000 mounted volunteers to join the army under Gen. Harrison. "We performed the duty. The regiment was raised. Every man in it was made of the right stuff." The massacre of 300 of their countrymen at the river Raisin where they were enclosed in a bullock pen and shot down in cold blood, one by one, under the eye of Proctor, the British general, had created a spirit in his troop which caused them all to make their wills before they left Kentucky resolving never again to return unless they came back conquerors over the butcherly murderers of their countryman. Each man was mounted and was armed with a rifle and pistols, a good sword and a sharp knife similar to the Indians. In fact these men knew what they had to contend with. They did not go out to fight by the day but by the job. When they arrived at the American camp in Canada Harrison was on the watch for Proctor. "O, how I did want to catch that fellow," said Col. Johnson. "I never thirsted for man's blood but Proctor was a monster. Even Tecumseh, an Indian warrior whose nature is savage and whose education taught him that a scalp was honorable no matter how obtained, was shocked at the conduct of the cowardly assassin. While Proctor was si-

---

<sup>7</sup> Col. Henry A. Proctor, born in Wales, 1765; died at Liverpool, England, 1859. A British general. He was colonel of a regiment in Canada in 1812; defeated the Americans under James Winchester at Frenchtown in 1813; was repulsed by Harrison at Fort Meigs, by Croghan at Fort Stephenson, and by Harrison at the battle of the Thames (October 5, 1813).

lently looking on at the massacre of our men in the bullock pen, Tecumseh came up and put a stop to the cold blooded murders telling Proctor "you could have prevented this but did not."

We all wanted to catch Proctor, said Col. Johnson. I asked permission of Gen. Harrison to go in search of him. I shall never forget the fire in his eye as he replied: "Go, Colonel, but remember discipline. The rashness of your brave Kentuckians has heretofore destroyed themselves. Be cautious, sir, as well as brave and active, as I know you all are." We were near that beautiful river of Canada, the Thames. I departed with my regiment in search of Proctor. In a short time we caught a spy who begged hard for his life. I told him if he did not tell us where Proctor was, I would instantly shoot him. I talked big, said Johnson, to scare him. I don't know whether I should have killed him or not. However, he said he was an American and had been compelled by Proctor to come out as a spy. He said that the British army was only within a few miles of us. I instantly sent word to Gen. Harrison of what this spy had developed and afterwards in marching to the spot designated sure enough there was Proctor and his soldiers drawn up in beautiful order on a rising ground about 700 strong. I again sent word to Gen. Harrison that "we had treed Proctor" and in a very short time Gen. Harrison came up with the main body of the army on foot. I again asked permission of Gen. Harrison to begin the battle. He granted that permission; and here let me say that Gen. Harrison behaved throughout this engagement like a brave officer. He was where he ought to have been—in the place where duty called him. As to my regiment, it was a pious regiment. That is, we had many religious men in it. Preacher Sucket was an uncommon man. I do believe he loved fighting better than anything else except praying—that is fighting the enemies of his country. Well, I divided my regiment into two bodies. My brother, James, commanded the 500 of them who were opposed to the British. Upon the first onset of brother James with a few of his men the British line fired entire. Upward of 350 of them all fired together, and what do you think was the damage? Why, fellow citizens, they killed one horse! Those falling back, the remain-

ing portion of the British also advanced and fired; but this time not a soul was hurt; they did not even touch a horse. Our men then advanced at full speed on the British who threw down their weapons calling out, "We surrender; we surrender!" Proctor the coward, had fled long before; like the captain I once heard of who told his men that they might fight or retreat as they deemed most advisable but as "retreat" might be the word and as he (the captain) was a little lame, he would set out now so that he might not be behind too far! So it was with Proctor. He had run away some time before. Such was the battle of the Thames, said Col. Johnson. The British were defeated by my brother James and his brave men without losing scarcely a man. (Here Col. Johnson concluded, but was called upon to give an account of that part of the regiment engaged with the Indians.)

Col. Johnson said that at his age it was wrong to put on any false modesty and as he had been called upon to relate that portion of the fight which took place with the Indians he would endeavor to do so. The Indians were 1,400 strong commanded by Tecumseh, one of the bravest warriors who ever drew breath. He was a sort of Washington among the Indians. That is they looked upon him as we looked upon Washington. The Indians were in ambush on the other side of what we were informed was an impassable swamp; but just before the battle came on a narrow passage over the swamp was discovered. Knowing well the Indian character I determined to push forward with about twenty men in order to draw forth the entire Indian fire, so that the remainder of the regiment might rush forward upon them while their rifles were empty. Having promised the wives, mothers and sisters of my men before we left Kentucky that I would place their husbands, sons and brothers in no hazard which I was unwilling to share myself, I put myself at the head of these twenty men and we advanced upon the covert in which I knew the Indians were concealed. The moment we came in view we received the whole Indian fire. Nineteen out of my twenty men dropped on the field. I felt that I was myself severely wounded. The mare I rode staggered and fell to her knees; she had fifteen balls in her as was afterwards ascertained but the noble ani-

mal recovered her feet by a touch from the rein. I waited but a few moments when the remainder of the troop came up and we pushed forward on the Indians who instantly retreated. I noticed an Indian chief among them who succeeded in rallying them three different times. This I thought I would endeavor to prevent because it was by this time known to the Indians that their allies, the British, had surrendered. I advanced singly upon him, keeping my right arm close to my side, and covered by the swamp he took to a tree and from thence deliberately fired upon me. Although I previously had four balls in me this last wound was more acutely painful than all of them. His ball struck me on the knuckle of my left hand, passed through my hand, and came out just above the wrist. I ran my left arm through the bridle rein, for my hand instantly swelled and became useless. The Indian supposed he had mortally wounded me; he came out from behind the tree and advanced upon me with uplifted tomahawk. When he had come within my mare's length of me I drew my pistol and instantly fired, having a dead aim upon him. He fell and the Indians shortly after either surrendered or had fled. My pistol had one ball and three buckshot in it, and the body of the Indian was found to have a ball through his body and three buckshot in different parts of his breast and head. (Thus fell Tecumseh, cried out someone of the audience.) Col. Johnson said he did not know that it was Tecumseh at that time. (Circumstances have rendered this a matter of certainty. No intelligent man, we believe, now pretends to doubt the fact.)

As Col. Johnson described these thrilling incidents, the vast hall was so still as to render the fluttering of one of the window curtains distinctly heard all over the room. Some one cried out "Huzza for the Hero"; and the simultaneous shout which instantly arose from a thousand voices might have waked the dead. We have given a very imperfect sketch of the remarks of Col. Johnson; they are taken entirely from memory. His speech was interspersed with lively anecdotes such as he knows how to tell, and which we should only spoil by attempting a repetition. He concluded by saying that the noble animal upon which he fought that day survived only till

she had borne him out of the press of the battle, when she fell dead, and I myself was unable to rise. I felt that dreamy feeling coming over me consequent upon the loss of blood and after the excitement of deadly strife has passed away. I was reported as dead to Gen. Harrison who instantly rode up to the spot when it was found that I was not dead but only possuming.

I cannot conclude, said Col. Johnson, without doing justice to the memory of my brave commander, Gen. Harrison<sup>s</sup>. He was a brave and experienced general. He was just where he ought to have been throughout the battle; he was ready with the remainder of the army to push forward to our support if it had been necessary; but Proctor was an arrant coward and ran away at the commencement of the battle; the foot soldiers of Harrison's forces were also drawn up in a hollow square, just in the position where they could do the greatest service to either division of my mounted regiment. Braver men never trod the earth than those foot soldiers. Col. Johnson concluded by again returning his sincere thanks to all present for the unmerited honors they had conferred upon him.

Col. Johnson was then conducted to his lodgings at the American, where a dinner was prepared upon the Democratic plan to which all had access if they chose to pay their six bits. Many excellent toasts were drank full of patriotic fervor.

In the evening, the Democratic Association of Sangamon county assembled in the hall of the House of Representatives, for the purpose of presenting a hickory cane to the Hero of the Thames. The large hall was filled to overflowing. Many ladies graced the occasion by their presence. Col. Johnson was introduced to the association, when Mr. Peck,<sup>e</sup> on behalf of the

<sup>s</sup> Gen. William Henry Harrison.

<sup>e</sup> Ebenezer Peck, early lawyer, was born in Portland, Maine, May 22, 1805; received an academical education, studied law and was admitted to the bar in Canada in 1827. He was twice elected to the provincial parliament and made king's counsel in 1833; came to Illinois in 1835, settling in Chicago; served in the State Senate (1838-40), and in the House (1840-42 and 1858-60); was also clerk of the Supreme Court (1841-45), reporter of Supreme Court decisions (1849-63), and member of the constitutional convention of 1869-70. Mr. Peck was an intimate personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, by whom he was appointed a member of the Court of Claims, at Washington, serving until 1875. Died, May 25, 1881.



Association addressed Col. Johnson in a few brief and appropriate remarks to which Col. Johnson replied in a very interesting speech of about an hour in length. He did ample justice on this occasion, as well as in the morning, to Gov. Shelby,<sup>10</sup> whom he described as foremost in council as well as in the field. In regard to the Oregon question which is now agitating the public mind, Col. Johnson declared himself in favor of the immediate occupation of the territory by the United States and of extending our laws over it. He said he was for taking possession, England to the contrary notwithstanding. My motto is, said the old hero, "take possession of Oregon, peaceably, if we can; forcibly, if we must." This sentiment was responded to by deafening shouts of approbation. The hickory cane presented to Col. Johnson was cut from the grave of the Sage of Monticello, and bore the following inscription: "Presented to Col. Richard M. Johnson by the Sangamon Democratic Association."

In the afternoon, the youth of the town formed a procession and waited on Col. Johnson at the American, where the old veteran received them like a father, encouraged them to fight for their country, when the lapse of time brought them on the stage as men and citizen soldiers. He addressed them in a speech filled with anecdotes and striking incidents, to which the boys listened with breathless and earnest attention. The colonel told them, that he could see by their flashing eyes that they were made of the stuff to stand by their country in after times against all foreign tyrants and despots.

On the next day (Sunday) Col. Johnson attended the Methodist church in the morning where he heard an interesting and eloquent sermon delivered by the Rev. Mr. Stamper,<sup>11</sup> and in the afternoon he visited the Baptist church where the Rev. Mr. Dodge<sup>12</sup> delivered a most impressive and excellent sermon. At dinner he partook of the hospitality of Col. William Prentiss accompanied by a few friends; and in the even-

---

<sup>10</sup> Governor Isaac Shelby of Kentucky, born in Maryland, December 11, 1750; Governor of Kentucky, 1792-96 and 1812-16; died in Kentucky, July 18, 1826.

<sup>11</sup> Rev. Jonathan Stamper, minister Methodist Church, 1841.

<sup>12</sup> Rev. Henry W. Dodge, minister Baptist Church, 1841-43.

ing he took tea with Mr. Walters<sup>14</sup> where several ladies and gentlemen had the pleasure of conversing with him. He is a most intelligent and sagacious man in private conversation; evidently showing that he understands perfectly the condition and wants of his country.

He departed in the Eastern stage for Terre Haute, about 10 o'clock, accompanied by Mr. Grubb, one of the Committee of Arrangements, and Mr. Brayman,<sup>15</sup> one of the Committee of Reception. He appeared greatly to have enjoyed his visit to the Sucker state; while we can assure him that a reciprocal pleasure was felt by all our citizens, in entertaining a guest so patriotic, so distinguished, and so thoroughly honest.

---

#### EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE SPEECH OF COLONEL RICHARD M. JOHNSON.

(From the Illinois State Register, June 2, 1843.)

Several of our friends have informed us that we have made a material misstatement of that part of Colonel Johnson's remarks, at this place, wherein he spoke of his personal conflict with the Indian chief at the battle of the Thames. We have made Colonel Johnson reply to the remark made by one of the audience, "thus fell Tecumseh," that "he did not know that it was Tecumseh at the time." Colonel Johnson did not say this. In fact we are satisfied from the unanimous opinion of

---

<sup>14</sup> William Walters, editor of the "Illinois State Register," of the firm of Walters & Weber.

<sup>15</sup> Mason Brayman, lawyer and soldier, was born in Buffalo, N. Y., May 23, 1813; brought up as a farmer, became a printer and edited "The Buffalo Bulletin," 1834-35; studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1836; removed west in 1837, was city attorney of Monroe, Mich., in 1838, and became editor of "The Louisville Advertiser" in 1841. In 1842 he opened a law office in Springfield, Ill., and the following year was appointed by Governor Ford a commissioner to adjust the Mormon troubles, in which capacity he rendered valuable service. In 1844-45 he was appointed to revise the statutes of the State. Later he devoted much attention to railroad enterprises, being attorney of the Illinois Central Railroad, 1851-55; then projected the construction of a railroad from Bird's Point, opposite Cairo, into Arkansas, which was partially completed before the war, and almost wholly destroyed during that period. In 1861 he entered the service as major of the Twenty-ninth Illinois Volunteers, taking part in a number of the early battles, including Fort Donelson and Shiloh; was promoted to a colonelcy for meritorious conduct at the latter, and for a time served as adjutant-general on the staff of General McClelland; was promoted to brigadier-general in September, 1862, at the close of the war receiving the brevet rank of major-general. After the close of the war he devoted considerable attention to reviving his railroad enterprises in the South; edited "The Illinois State Journal," 1872-73; removed to Wisconsin and was appointed Governor of Idaho in 1876, serving four years, after which he returned to Ripon, Wis. Died in Kansas City, February 27, 1895.

many persons present with whom we have conversed, that he made no reply to the remark.

From the nature of the conflict between Johnson and this Indian chief, they must both have known each other. Colonel Johnson saw the chief rallying the Indians a third time. The chief was behind the stump of a tree, the body of which was lying towards Colonel Johnson. The Colonel approached the Indian on one side of the prostrate tree; and his mare stumbled across the dry branches of the tree. The noise attracted the Indian, who instantly advanced on Johnson, on the other side of the tree. Colonel Johnson said that he knew by the eye of the chief that there was no back out in him. He knew that he would fight; and he accordingly held down his right arm so as to protect it. It was covered by the swamp. The Indian then fired, as we before stated, and the ball was only prevented from passing through Johnson's body by striking him on the knuckle of the left hand, which was in front of him. As we before stated, Johnson held his fire until sure of his enemy, when he drew his pistol and shot him. It was a brave and glorious act; which has very few to equal it in the annals of chivalry in any age or country.